

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0259
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 01084

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MARR, MOPS, LE, IS
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: CONVERSATIONS WITH LEBANESE
AMBASSADOR TUENI AND UN USYG GUYER

1. LEBANESE PERMREP TUENI TOLD AMB LEONARD NOON MARCH 24
THAT THREE CONTINUING THREATS TO LAUNCHING UNIFIL --
HADDAD'S FORCES, PLO AND OTHER PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS, AND
ELEMENTS COMING FROM IRAQ -- WOULD BE TAKEN UP BY KEY
ARAB AMBASSADORS AT LUNCH TODAY. TUENI WOULD PROPOSE
THAT ARAB DELEGATION INCLUDING PERMREPS OF SYRIA AND
IRAQ MAKE COLLECTIVE DEMARCHE TO SOVIET DELEGATION TO
EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR "USSR COOPERATION" JURING
SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE AND TO URGE SOVIETS TO CONTINUE TO
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COOPERATE IN ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIFIL. TUENI NOTED
PARENTHETICALLY THAT IRAQI DELEGATION RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS
DURING SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE TO ALIGN ITSELF
WITH SOVIET POSITION. TUENI THEN REFERRED TO PALESTINIANS
WHO, HE SAID, HAD FIRED OVER THE HEADS OF FRENCH
TROOPS ATTEMPTING TO ENTER TYRE AND SAID HE HOPED
SIILASVUO'S CONVERSATION WITH ARAFAT MARCH 23 WOULD HAVE

PROPER IMPACT ON PLO ACTIONS. (TUENI SEEMED CONFIDENT OF HIS INFORMATION THAT SIILASVUO AND JONAH HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY UNNY TO MEET IN BEIRUT WITH ARAFAT. THIS DOES NOT JIBE WITH WHAT UNSEC HAS TOLD US, PER PARA 9 BELOW.)

2. TUENI THEN READ PORTIONS FROM REPORTING CABLE FROM BEIRUT STATING THAT UN INTERVENTION WITH PLO HAD COOLING-DOWN EFFECT. UN REP, FRENCH AND SAUDI AMBS HAD MADE APPROACHES TO PLO SEEKING ITS COMPLIANCE WITH UNSC RESOLUTIONS. PLO IS NOW IN PROCESS OF LETTING UN FORCES TAKE POSITIONS AND AVOIDING CLASHES WITH THEM. FRENCH CONTINGENT WAS ESCORTED TO TYRE BY PALESTINIAN MILITARY POLICE. FRENCH WERE ALSO ACCOMPANIED BY SMALL BUT SYMBOLICALLY IMPORTANT LEBANESE ARMY LIAISON UNIT. FRENCH CONTINGENT TOOK OVER TYRE BARRACKS WHICH HAD LAST BEEN OCCUPIED BY PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS.

3. LEONARD NOTED POSSIBILITY OF WALDHEIM'S CALLING ARAFAT, POINTING OUT DANGER OF ELEVATING ARAFAT'S STATUS AND DEFERRING TO ARAB EXPERT JUDGMENT ON THIS. TUENI WONDERED WHETHER IN LIGHT OF ARAFAT'S PROCLIVITY FOR TRUSTED, CONTINUING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, SOMEONE LIKE JAMES JONAH SHOULD NOT BE CALLING ON ARAFAT REGULARLY. TUENI REMARKED THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS A POSSIBLE WALDHEIM CALL TO ARAFAT WITH OTHER ARABS HERE.
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4. DISCUSSION TURNED TO AREA BETWEEN ZAHRANI AND LITANI RIVERS. TUENI THOUGHT GEN. KHOURY MIGHT UNDERTAKE TO DEPLOY LEBANESE ARMY UNITS THERE. LEONARD WONDERED WHETHER NON-SYRIAN ADF TROOPS MIGHT BE A WAY OUT. TUENI SUGGESTED US AND OTHERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE KHOURY TO ASSUME MORE ENERGETIC ROLE. TUENI (WHO ASKED TO BE PROTECTED ON THIS) PROPOSED US MILITARY ATTACHE OFFICE IN BEIRUT MIGHT BE EXPANDED WITH EXPERTS TO HELP KHOURY IN SHAPING NEW LEBANESE ARMY. US ADVICE COULD ACCOMPANY US RESPONSE TO FURTHER LEBANESE REQUESTS FOR EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES.

5. AT CONCLUSION OF CONVERSATION TUENI COMMENTED THAT WALDHEIM'S CONVERSATION WITH PM BEGIN MARCH 23 HAD BEEN HELPFUL. BEGIN GAVE ASSURANCES OF ISRAELI INTENTIONS TO WITHDRAW. LEONARD NOTED THAT WE HAD JUST LEARNED OF GOI'S PLAN TO ANNOUNCE ISRAELI TROOP WITHDRAWALS THAT HAD ALREADY TAKEN PLACE (TEL AVIV 4031). TUENI SAID THIS WENT FURTHER THAN REPORTS OF "DIS-DEPLOYMENT" WHICH HE WAS RECEIVING. FINALLY, TUENI CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD JUST GOTTEN WORD FROM PRESIDENT SARKIS' OFFICE REGARDING THE ADF COMMUNIQUE. LEONARD PROVIDED COPY FROM

BEIRUT 1617.

6. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH POLCOUNS, USYG GUYER ALSO MENTIONED WALDHEIM'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH BEGIN EVENING OF MARCH 23 AND BEGIN'S ASSURANCES TO WALDHEIM THAT ISRAEL INTENDED TO WITHDRAW TOTALLY FROM LEBANON. GUYER SAID WALDHEIM HAD TELEPHONED SYRIAN FM DHADDAM MORNING OF MARCH 24 TO ASK THAT KHADDAM SEE SIILASVUO DURING LATTER'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS MARCH 25 (USUN 1066). KHADDAM HAD READILY AGREED AND WILL SEE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 01084

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SIILASVUO IN AFTERNOON. WALDHEIM THEN TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO TELL KHADDAM OF BEGIN'S RENEWED ASSURANCES TO THE SYG ON ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND, ACCORDING TO GUYER, KHADDAM HAD REACTED VERY FAVORABLY TO THIS INFORMATION. POLCOUNS TOLD GUYER OF WEIZMAN STATEMENT ON WITHDRAWALS REPORTED TEL AVIV 4031 AND SUGGESTED THIS BE PASSED TO SIILASVUO, WITH CAUTION THAT FIGURES MIGHT NEED CONFIRMATION.

7. POLCOUNS DISCUSSED WITH GUYER PROBLEM OF CONTROL OF

PALESTINIANS NORTH OF LITANI, NOTING THAT ADF COMMUNIQUE (BEIRUT 1614 AND 1617) WAS REASSURING BUT SOMETHING OF AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY IN TERMS OF IMPLEMENTATION. GUYER EXPRESSED VIEW THAT BEST SOLUTION WOULD BE FOR LEBANESE
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ARMY TO MOVE INTO AREA, IF THAT IS FEASIBLE. IN THIS CONNECTION HE SAID UN GETS VERY CONFLICTING INFORMATION FROM LEBANESE ABOUT THEIR CAPABILITIES AND WOULD LIKE TO HAVE PRECISE INFO ON JUST WHAT THEY CAN DO ON THIS SCORE. THIS APPLIES TO POSSIBLE AVAILABILITY OF LEBANESE POLICE AS WELL. (PERHAPS EMBASSY BEIRUT CAN ENCOURAGE GOL TO CLARIFY THIS, FOR BOTH UN AND OURSELVES.)

8. GUYER DOUBTS THAT LEBANESE HAVE CAPABILITY AT PRESENT TO DEAL WITH SITUATION NORTH OF LITANI AND THINKS NEXT BEST ALTERNATIVE IS TO HAVE ADF MOVE INTO AREA. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT UNIFIL MANDATE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY PRECLUDE IT FROM MOVING ACROSS LITANI BUT DID NOT THINK IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY OR PRACTICALLY FEASIBLE FOR UN TO DO SO. HE POINTED OUT OPPOSITION THAT WOULD BE VOICED IN SC TO UNIFIL TAKING ON PLO IN THIS FASHION AND TO PROBABLE DIFFICULTY THAT WOULD ARISE IN OBTAINING REQUIRED INCREASE IN SIZE OF FORCE. HE SAID IF UN WERE TO ASK FOR ADF TO MOVE INTO AREA IN QUESTION, HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD HAVE TO DISCUSS IT WITH ISRAELIS FIRST.

9. GUYER SAID ACTING UNIFIL COMMANDER ERSKINE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO TRY TO SEE ARAFAT ON ERSKINE'S NEXT TRIP TO BEIRUT, WHICH WILL BE MARCH 25 OR 26. UN DID NOT WANT HIM TO MAKE SPECIAL TRIP FOR THIS PURPOSE BUT HAD AGREED THAT CONTACT WITH ARAFAT WAS IMPORTANT AT THIS STAGE. IT HAD BEEN CONSIDERED PREFERABLE TO KEEP CONTACT AT ERSKINE, RATHER THAN SIILASVUO, LEVEL FOR NOW, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED FREQUENT UN CONTACTS WITH PLO, IN LIGHT OF ITS OBSERVER STATUS, ARE NORMAL AND THAT WALDHEIM SEES ARAFAT EACH TIME SYG VISITS THE AREA.
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10. GUYER INDICATED UNIFIL DEPLOYMENT IN GENERAL PROCEEDING SATISFACTORILY, WITH FRENCH AND IRANIANS TAKING UP THEIR POSITIONS, SWEDES MOVING TOWARD EASTERN SECTOR, AND NORWEGIANS DUE TO ARRIVE IN FEW DAYS. LEONARD

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